

Message Text

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21

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

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TAGS: PFOR VS

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEMORIAL DAY REMARKS

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH TELECOM WITH STEARNS WHO INDICATED POSSIBILITY OF ISSUING AMBASSADOR'S MEMORIAL DAY REMARKS AS DEPT PRESS RELEASE THERE FOLLOWS TEXT OF SPEECH BY AMBASSADOR MARTIN DELIVERED AT EMBASSY CEREMONY ON MAY 27.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

THIS IS THE DAY ON WHICH WE AMERICANS TRADITIONALLY PAY OUR RESPECTS TO OUR FALLEN COMPATRIOTS. IT IS ESPECIALLY FITTING THAT WE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN THIS NOW TRANQUIL GARDEN WHERE, ONLY SIX SHORT YEARS AGO, FIVE VALIANT MEN GAVE THEIR LIVES IN DEFENSE OF FREEDOM.

IT IS ALSO FITTING THAT WE ARE JOINED TODAY BY REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER NATIONS WHO RESPONDED TO OUR COMMON HERITAGE---DEVOTION TO FREEDOM. WE, THEREFORE, PAUSE TO REMEMBER THOSE SONS OF KOREA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, THE PHILIPPINES AND THAILAND WHO FELL ON THE FIELD OF HONOR.

MOST PARTICULARLY, WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE, WHOSE SACRIFICES IN DEFENSE OF THEIR OWN FREEDOM FAR EXCEEDED THOSE OF THEIR FRIENDS, AND WHOSE RESILIENCE AND FORTITUDE CONTINUE TO EVOKE THE ADMIRATION OF ALL WHO VALUE THE IDEALS WHICH BROUGHT US TOGETHER AS ALLIES.

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TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE DIED THAT FREEDOM MIGHT LIVE, WE

DEDICATE THIS FREEDOM TREE AS THEIR LIVING MEMORIAL. LET US WHO LIVE IN THE ENJOYMENT OF THIS FREEDOM REDEDICATE OURSELVES TO ITS PRESERVATION.

AS THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE WERE ABLE TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN DEFENSE, WE AND OUR ALLIES WITHDREW OUR MILITARY FORCES. NOW THE BURDEN OF THE FIGHTING, WHICH STILL CONTINUES, UNHAPPILY, IS WHOLLY BORNE BY THE MILITARY FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM. CONTRARY TO THE EXPECTATIONS OF THEIR OPPONENTS THEY HAVE PROVEN, BEYOND ANY DOUBT, THAT THEIR TOTAL COMMITMENT TO MAINTAIN THEIR FREEDOM WILL PREVAIL.

AS THIS BECOMES INCREASINGLY CLEAR, WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE REALIZATION OF THE LEADERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM IN HANOI THAT THEIR OWN INTERESTS WILL BE BEST SERVED BY THE FULL AND COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS OF JANUARY 1973. THIS WAS, IS, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE THE ABIDING DESIRE OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES. I AM COMPLETELY CONVINCED IT IS ALSO THE ABIDING DESIRE OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM. THEREFORE, WE EARNESTLY HOPE THAT HANOI WILL SOON DETERMINE TO RETURN TO THE USE OF THE MACHINERY SET UP UNDER THE PARIS AGREEMENTS AND PROCEED IN GOOD FAITH AND WITH SERIOUS INTENT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM THE MODALITIES WHICH WILL PERMIT THE FULL AND COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS.

IT IS PAST TIME FOR THE FIGHTING AND THE KILLING TO CEASE. IT IS PAST TIME TO INSURE THAT THE SENSELESS SLAUGHTER OF THE CHILDREN AT CAI LAY AND SONG PHU SHALL NOT OCCUR AGAIN. AND IT IS LONG PAST THE TIME WHEN THE GREAT INTELLIGENCE, THE ADAPTABILITY, THE INNOVATIVE GENIUS, AND THE PROVEN CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED HARD WORK OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH, SHOULD BE DIRECTED TOWARD THE CREATIVE TASKS OF RECONSTRUCTION, OF REHABILITATION, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SOCIETY AND ECONOMY WHICH WILL PROVIDE FOR THE CHILDREN OF VIET-NAM THE CHANCE FOR A BETTER FUTURE.

I KNOW THIS IS THE GOAL OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES. I KNOW THIS GOAL IS SHARED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM. I ALSO DEEPLY BELIEVE THIS GOAL IS SHARED BY THE PEOPLE OF NORTH VIET NAM, BY MANY OF ITS YOUNGER OFFICIALS, AND BY THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF ITS BRIGHT YOUNG STUDENTS WHO GROW WEARY OF THE COMPULSIVE OBSESSION OF ITS ELDERLY

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LEADERS THAT THE "MANDATE OF HEAVEN" HAS ORDAINED THAT HANOI MUST EXERCISE HEGEMONY OVER ALL SOUTHEAST ASIA. THIS ATTITUDE IS STRIKINGLY UNDERSCORED BY THE BITTER SLOGAN, "BORN IN THE NORTH-DIED IN THE SOUTH", THAT BECAME COMMON AMONG THESE YOUNG MEN ON THEIR WEARY TRIP DOWN THE INFILTRATION TRAIL. THEY KNOW THIS IS NOW AN UNREALIZABLE DREAM AND THAT IT IS MADNESS TO CONTINUE TO BE CONSUMED BY THIS OBSESSION. IN THE FUTURE ONE HOPES THEIR VOICES WILL BE INCREASINGLY INFLUENTIAL.

IN THE MEANTIME, IF THE ELDERLY LEADERS OF HANOI ARE STILL COUNTING ON THE EFFICACY OF THE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN BEING WAGED IN THE UNITED STATES TO DRASTICALLY CURTAIL THE ASSISTANCE THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM WILL NEED OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, THIS TOO WILL PROVE TO BE AN ILLUSORY DREAM. IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO DECEIVE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FOR A WHILE, BUT AS THE WHOLE TRUTH EMERGES ABOUT THE CURRENT REALITIES IN VIET NAM, THE AMERICAN CONGRESS CAN BE COUNTED ON TO MAKE THE CORRECT DECISIONS.

A PERFECT CASE EXAMPLE IS NOW BEING PROVIDED BY THE GREAT EFFORT BEING MADE TO PERSUADE THE CONGRESS THAT DRASTIC REDUCTIONS IN THE LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE TO THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM WILL SOMEHOW FACILITATE POLITICAL ACCOMMODATIONS. THE WHOLE TRUTH IS, OF COURSE, THE EXACT REVERSE. THE GREATEST POSSIBLE SPUR TO SERIOUS PROGRESS TOWARD FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS WOULD BE FOR THE CONGRESS TO AUTHORIZE AND APPROPRIATE THE FULL 750 MILLION DOLLARS REQUESTED FOR ECONOMIC AID FOR THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR. AS CONGRESS CUTS THROUGH THE PROPAGANDA FOG AND PERCEIVES THE WHOLE TRUTH I AM QUITE CONFIDENT OF THE OUTCOME. FOR THESE DECISIONS, CORRECTLY MADE, WILL PERMIT US TO COMPLETE OUR INVOLVEMENT AND LEAVE THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM ECONOMICALLY VIABLE, MILITARILY CAPABLE OF DEFENDING ITSELF WITH ITS OWN MANPOWER, AND FREE TO CHOOSE ITS OWN GOVERNMENT AND ITS OWN LEADERS AS ITS OWN PEOPLE MAY THEMSELVES FREELY DETERMINE.

AS IT BECOMES INCREASINGLY EVIDENT THAT THIS GOAL IS NOT ONLY REALISTIC BUT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED RATHER QUICKLY, WE CAN CONFIDENTLY COUNT ON THE CORRECT DECISIONS BEING MADE BY THE CONGRESS. WE SOMETIMES FORGET THAT THE AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN VIET NAM HAS NEVER REALLY BEEN A PARTISAN MATTER. UNDER FOUR PRESIDENTS, TWO FROM EACH PARTY, OUR PURPOSE HAS BEEN CONSISTENT. I RECALL THE WORDS OF THE LATE SENATOR ROBERT KENNEDY WHEN HE CITED "THE ONE BASIC CONDITION, ONE IRREDUCIBLE DEMAND, ONE POINT" ON WHICH WE CANNOT YIELD. "FOR THE UNITED STATES," SENATOR KENNEDY SAID, "IT MUST BE THAT WE WILL NOT ABANDON SOUTH VIET NAM TO FORCIBLY TAKE-
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OVER BY A MINORITY". A MINORITY, WHICH SENATOR ROBERT KENNEDY AND PRESIDENT JOHN KENNEDY FULLY UNDERSTOOD TO BE ONLY A SOUTHERN SURROGATE FOR THE NORTHERN INVADER.

I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF WORKING CLOSELY WITH BOTH THESE KENNEDY BROTHERS, NEITHER, FOR ONE MOMENT, WOULD HAVE BEEN WILLING TO BE COUNTED AMONG THOSE WHO WILL NOT FACE UP TO THE OBLIGATIONS OF FREEDOM, AMONG THOSE WHO ARE CONTENT TO LEAVE THE SACRIFICES TO OTHERS, AMONG THOSE WHO DERIDE THE PATRIOTISM OF THEIR COMPATRIOTS, AMONG THOSE WHO WISH TO SHARE BLESSINGS WITHOUT BURDENS, OR AMONG THOSE WHO CLAIM RIGHTS WITHOUT ACKNOWLEDGING RESPONSIBILITIES. AND ABOVE ALL THEIR LIVES EXEMPLIFIED THAT MOST CHARACTERISTIC OF AMERICAN TRAITS --- OUR DETERMINATION AND PRIDE THAT WE FINISH WHAT WE SET OUT TO DO.

SO, AS WE COMMEMORATE THE SACRIFICES OF WE ARE GATHERED HERE TODAY, WE MUST RESOLVE THAT WE WILL NOT YIELD THROUGH EXPEDIENCY,

TIMIDITY, OR SELFISHNESS THE FREEDOM WHICH HAS THUS FAR BEEN
SUSTAINED WITH STEADFASTNESS, BRAVERY, AND GENEROSITY.

AND TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIET NAM --- WHO ARE DETERMINED TO
PERSEVERE IN THE DEFENSE OF THEIR FREEDOM UNTIL THOSE WHO THREATEN
IT REALIZE THAT IT IS THEIR AGGRESSION WHICH IS FUTILE --- LET THIS
AMERICAN TREE WHICH WE PLANT TODAY BE, NOT ONLY A LIVING MEMORIAL
TO THE AMERICAN PATRIOTS OF THE PAST, BUT ALSO IN THE FUTURE A
LIVING SYMBOL AND REMINDER THAT FOR A BRIEF PERIOD THE AMERICANS
CAME TO VIET NAM ONLY BECAUSE OF OUR COMMON COMMITMENT TO
FREEDOM AND THAT WHEN WE LEFT, THAT FREEDOM WAS INTACT.

MAY THIS TREE OF FREEDOM TAKE ROOT AND FLOURISH IN THE RICH
SOIL OF VIET NAM. END TEXT
MARTIN

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